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## DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

12 September 1986

China-Eastern Europe: Party Ties Likely 

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## Summary

Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev's recent overtures to Beijing have bolstered the process of reviving Sino-East European party relations. The party leaders of Poland and East Germany will visit Beijing in the next two months. Unlike Moscow, Beijing does not see party relations with Eastern Europe as leading to reestablished party ties between China and the Soviet Union. The Chinese have been expanding economic and political relations with Eastern Europe for several years as part of their "independent foreign policy" of reducing tensions with the Soviet Bloc and expanding relations with developing countries to balance China's opening to the West. Beijing hopes to increase its influence in Moscow's backyard and to encourage both East European independence of Moscow and East-West European detente. China does not, however, want to upset Sino-US relations by giving the impression that Beijing is reassessing its ties to the West. For its part, Eastern Europe supports Moscow's move to reduce tensions within the Communist world, and hopes improved relations with China will pay economic benefits as well as lead to greater Soviet tolerance of diversity in Eastern Europe.

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This memorandum was prepared by  Office of East Asian Analysis, and  Office of European Analysis. Information available as of 12 September 1986 was used in its preparation. Comments and queries are welcome and may be directed to the Chief, International Security Branch, OEA,

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### Unprecedented Visits

Statements by several Chinese and East European officials in recent months suggest that they are preparing to reestablish party relations suspended since the Sino-Soviet break of the mid-1960s.<sup>1</sup>

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Gorbachev's overtures to China in his Vladivostok speech of 28 July underscore Moscow's effort to reduce tensions with Beijing, and this conciliatory mood could facilitate the normalizing of Sino-East European party relations.

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China may reestablish party ties with Poland and East Germany during the visits to Beijing of Poland's Wojciech Jaruzelski and East Germany's Erich Honecker in late September and late October, respectively. Each is party chief as well as head of state, making the visits the highest-level contacts with China in over 20 years by the East European parties that follow Moscow's foreign policy lead.

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Jaruzelski will stop over in Beijing for a few hours on 28 September after an earlier scheduled visit to Mongolia and North Korea, according to Polish Embassy sources in Beijing. He is making an unofficial working visit rather than a state visit, but we expect he will meet with senior Chinese state and party officials. Honecker, who was invited first and for a longer stay, will be the official guest of both Chinese Party General Secretary Hu Yaobang and President Li Xiannian and probably will sign one or more economic cooperation agreements.

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### Chinese Motivations

Beijing has stepped up its efforts to strengthen political and economic ties to Moscow's East European allies ever since Hu announced China's "independent foreign policy" at the 12th Party Congress in September 1982. We believe the Chinese seek to:

- Encourage East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Bulgaria to emulate Romania in pursuing foreign policies less subservient to Moscow.
- Promote Beijing's long-range vision of a multipolar world in which China, Japan, and a united Europe enjoy greater autonomy from the superpowers.
- Further legitimize Chinese modernization efforts both at home and within the Communist world by sharing experiences with reform-minded Hungary.

<sup>1</sup> For purposes of this analysis, Eastern Europe refers only to East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Bulgaria. China already enjoys strong party ties with Romania and Yugoslavia; Albania does not have ties with either China or the Soviet Union.

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[REDACTED]

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- Develop alternative sources for acquiring Soviet technology and markets for Chinese products. [REDACTED]

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China, in our judgment, does not view strengthened party ties with Eastern Europe as paving the way for party relations with the Soviet Union. [REDACTED]

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### East European Motivations

Eastern Europe, in contrast, supports Moscow's efforts to use improvements in Sino-East European ties to promote Sino-Soviet reconciliation. We believe the East Europeans hope as well that a diminution of the bitter factionalism that has plagued the Communist world since the two giants split in the mid-1960s might increase Soviet tolerance of diversity within Eastern Europe. [REDACTED]

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Each East European country--especially East Germany--has its own agenda with a broad range of political and economic objectives. On the political side, Honecker has striven to raise East Germany's profile in international affairs and to present himself as a Central European statesman and political interlocutor as sought after as West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, who visited Beijing in 1984 and hosted Hu in Bonn this past June. Similarly, we believe Jaruzelski would welcome the boost to his international image that being the first East European party head (with the notable exception of Romania's Nicolae Ceaucescu, who has always been a foreign policy maverick) visit China would bring. Of the remaining regional party leaders, the one most likely to visit China next is Hungary's Janos Kadar. According to Embassy sources in Budapest, the aged Kadar may be planning such a trip, but he loathes flying. In any case, the Hungarians would welcome the opportunity to develop relations with another reform-oriented Communist state. [REDACTED]

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East Germany has served most often as Moscow's East European stalking-horse in developing economic and political ties to China. Sino-East German government relations have expanded at an increasing tempo since 1983. Honecker's visit thus caps a series of exchanges in the past year--the highest level in over 25 years--in which three East German Politburo members holding government posts have met with Hu during visits to Beijing. [REDACTED]

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### **Outlook**

We believe China will gradually normalize party relations with all of Eastern Europe, which should lead to increased senior party exchanges and attendance at one another's party congresses. China is scheduled to convene its next party congress in 1987, and the East Europeans will hold theirs in the early 1990s. Party ties will complement existing government and economic relations, which will also continue to develop at an increasing rate. At the same time, the East Europeans will be on guard against Chinese efforts to use them against the Soviets. For its part, Beijing will seek to reassure the West--and Washington in particular--that party relations with Eastern Europe do not foreshadow similar ties to Moscow. Deng and other senior Chinese leaders have recently stressed that any progress in Sino-Soviet relations depends on major Soviet concessions on Cambodia.

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**SUBJECT: China-Eastern Europe: Party Ties Likely** [REDACTED]

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